

MEAP

**MICHIGAN
EDUCATIONAL
ASSESSMENT
PROGRAM**

**Grade 7
Writing**

**Part 1: Writing from Knowledge
and Experience**

Score Point 6

***Released Items
Winter 2004***

PART 1

WRITING FROM KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

WRITE ABOUT THE THEME:

TAKING CREATIVE RISKS

Often, a great idea or great success starts with someone asking the question “Why not?” and continues with creative thinking and taking action.

Do **ONLY ONE** of the following:

tell about a time when you or someone you know had a creative idea
that may or may not have worked out

OR

describe how someone overcame obstacles or stood up against criticism to carry out a creative idea

OR

explain how someone came up with a creative solution to a problem and acted on it

OR

tell about a time when someone may NOT have chosen to take a creative or personal risk

OR

write about the theme in your own way.

You may use examples from real life, from what you read or watch, or from your imagination.

Your audience will be interested adults.

When you are ready, you may begin your draft.

Pages 5–8 in this test booklet may be used for writing down ideas, organizing your thoughts, or writing a rough draft. Use the checklists on page 9 to help you improve your writing. Page 10 contains the rubric used by readers to score your writing. Nothing written in this booklet will be scored. Your final copy must be written in Part 1 of your **Answer Folder** starting on page 1.

Michigan Educational Assessment Program
Grade 7 English Language Arts
Holistic Scorepoint Descriptions
Part 1: Writing from Knowledge and Experience

Here is an explanation of what readers think about as they score your writing.

- 6** The writing is exceptionally engaging, clear, and focused. Ideas and content are thoroughly developed with relevant details and examples where appropriate. The writer's control over organization and the connections between ideas moves the reader smoothly and naturally through the text. The writer shows a mature command of language, including precise word choice that results in a compelling piece of writing. Tight control over language use and mastery of writing conventions contribute to the effect of the response.
- 5** The writing is engaging, clear, and focused. Ideas and content are well developed with relevant details and examples where appropriate. The writer's control over organization and the connections between ideas effectively moves the reader through the text. The writer shows a command of language, including precise word choice. The language is well controlled, and occasional lapses in writing conventions are hardly noticeable.
- 4** The writing is generally clear and focused. Ideas and content are developed with relevant details and examples where appropriate, although there may be some unevenness. The response is generally coherent, and its organization is functional. The writer's command of language, including word choice, supports meaning. Lapses in writing conventions are not distracting.
- 3** The writing is somewhat clear and focused. Ideas and content are developed with limited or partially successful use of examples and details. There may be evidence of an organizational structure, but it may be artificial or ineffective. Incomplete mastery over writing conventions and language use may interfere with meaning some of the time. Vocabulary may be basic.
- 2** The writing is only occasionally clear and focused. Ideas and content are underdeveloped. There may be little evidence of organizational structure. Vocabulary may be limited. Limited control over writing conventions may make the writing difficult to understand.
- 1** The writing is generally unclear and unfocused. Ideas and content are not developed or connected. There may be no noticeable organizational structure. Lack of control over writing conventions may make the writing difficult to understand.

Not ratable if:

- A** off topic
- B** illegible
- C** written in a language other than English
- D** blank/refused to respond

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: PART 1
(WRITING FROM KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE)

It was going to be difficult to win the election. I was going up against beautiful, popular A _____ and ingenious, studious C _____. Both had good points in their views on M _____ Jr. High, and both would make awesome presidents. But I still wanted to win.

Shivers of excitement mingled with nervous tremors as I thought about my upcoming speech. It was "different," as J _____, my best friend, had mildly put it. I didn't know whether my peers would accept the speech as grounds to vote for me, or whether they would think it bizarre and use it against me. In 5 minutes I thought, barely listening to A _____'s bubbly speech, I would know.

I'm not the prettiest or the smartest girl at M _____ Jr. High, and I was terrified that my small reputation would be corrupted by the election. Socially, I had all to lose and

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: PART 1
(WRITING FROM KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE)

more to gain. But I wasn't going to back out now. Endless hours had been spent coaching the 5 cheerleaders I'd managed to hire to perform. Days had flown by as I enacted my perfectly choreographed dance. I had turned my boring, low-key speech into a jazzy, funky spectacular.

I was still quivering with uncertainty as to how the whole ordeal would go over. Usually, I did not thrive on being the entrepreneur of the middle school world, nor did I live to be in the limelight. Today, though, was different. Today, win or lose, I would make history.

A few shallow claps echoed through the auditorium as C wrapped up his speech.

"And now, Ms. S will bring to us her speech."

Already I had captured the students' attention as I strutted out in my hot pink tank-top and clingy black stretch pants. I smiled and waved — the cheerleaders' cue — and I waited. My heart was pounding as the trio of girls and

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: PART 1
(WRITING FROM KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE)

two guys leaped onto the stage and blasted off into their retro, energetic cheer. My three friends (S _____, T _____, and J _____) and I matched our moves to the beat of the cheers. The upbeat presentation had every student clapping their hands to the rhythm of our balanced steps. With a series of cartwheels and flips, we finished our routine.

I smiled at the whopping audience, grateful for their applause. "Vote for me," I shouted, out of breath, "and every day could be like this!" Calmly, as though nothing out of the ordinary had occurred, I exited the stage.

The election took place a day later. I won, though it was a close race. While at the assembly called to announce the new student council officers, A _____ and C _____ came up to me. "Congratulations," A

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: PART 1
(WRITING FROM KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE)

offered, and I nodded in agreement. I grinned, suddenly feeling very comfortable with my two previous competitors that I had so feared before.

The three of us have remained close friends since the election. I feel that I am very lucky to have been a middle school entrepreneur that succeeded in my risk, and who made a few friends along the way.

Score Point: 6

This response offers an exceptionally engaging look at how a student uses creativity to win a student council election. The content is thoroughly developed with details and examples to explain that, even with self-doubt, having a will to win and using ingenuity, one can succeed. The word choice captures the emotion the writer feels being an underdog in an election.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: PART 1
(WRITING FROM KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE)

The Light at the End of the Tunnel

As the bright lights of New York became overshadowed by the blazing sun, a teenage girl arose too. Another day, I thought to herself as she unsteadily walked to the bathroom. I was at the ripe age of seventeen. She had coffee cream colored skin and long, ebony hair. She quickly took a shower and put on a knee-length, denim skirt, a beige top, and beige leather sandals. She threw her hair up in to a simple ponytail and left the house briskly.

I steamed through the crowds down in the subways of Queens, New York like an ordinary person. But I was not an ordinary person. She never worried about boys, friends, or clothes. She worried about pregnancies,

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: PART 1
(WRITING FROM KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE)

drugs, and keeping herself alive. This things plagued Queens like a swarm of bees. She desperately wanted to be one of the likely few teenagers of Queens to get out and make something of herself. I swiftly got her ticket and got on the L train to get her to her high school for I could not wait to get to school.

I loved to go to school rather than being on the streets. She saw what happened to people who fall like the leaves of autumn, clinging on for dear life, but slowly drift to the ground. She was determined not to be one of those people like her brother, I.

I painfully reached into her mind about her brother I, who was a good student, but became overtaken with drug use. Two years ago I needed money for drugs and asked I to

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: PART 1
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loan him some. I stood firm that day and said no. She pleaded with him to stay home and not to buy drugs. Instead of listening to her, I flew like a vulture out to get his prey. That night I's mother got a call from the New York Police Department. They had found I's body in a dumpster. I's drug dealer and him got in to a fight. I was tragically stabbed to death. Swiftly, I pushed the painful memory far back into her head and held back tears as she got off the train. Then she quickly quickly clattered through the crowd to school.

Once I got to school, she changed into a flowing robe of black silk. I slowly walked to the auditorium and then found herself at

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: PART 1
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the podium. I took a deep breath, remembering her brother. She then said "We have achieved what others thought we could not, and pushed pass the hurdles in our way. Now we have the chance to succeed. Congratulations class of 2002."

Score Point: 6

This response thoughtfully illustrates the personal struggle of an inner-city teenager attempting to survive and succeed against the odds. Using details and examples that are thoroughly developed, the writer successfully recounts the way others have fallen to the street, including her brother. A sophisticated writing style, along with perceptive observations, produces a compelling piece of writing.